

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 FEA-01 AID-05 CEQ-01 CIAE-00 ERDA-07
COME-00 DODE-00 EB-08 EPA-04 INR-07 IO-13 L-03 NSF-02
NSC-05 NSAE-00 PM-04 USIA-15 OES-06 SS-15 SP-02
INT-05 ACDA-10 AGRE-00 CEA-01 CG-00 DLOS-06 DOTE-00
FMC-02 TRSE-00 H-02 JUSE-00 OMB-01 PA-02 PRS-01
SAL-01 /142 W

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P 141930Z MAR 77

FM AMCONSUL VANCOUVER

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 3375

INFO AMEMBASSY OTTAWA PRIORITY

AMCONSUL CALGARY PRIORITY

UNCLAS VANCOUVER 0245

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: ENRG, CA

SUBJECT: ENERGY: KITIMAT OIL PIPELINE INQUIRY

1. FEDERAL JUSTICE MINISTER BASFORD ANNOUNCED IN VANCOUVER ON MARCH 11 THAT B.C. UNIVERSITY LAW PROFESSOR DR. ANDREW THOMPSON HAS BEEN APPOINTED TO HOLD A ONE-MAN PUBLIC INQUIRY INTO THE MARINE ASPECTS OF THE PROPOSED KITIMAT OIL PIPELINE PROJECT. THOMPSON IS THE FORMER CHAIRMAN OF THE B.C. ENERGY COMMISSION UNDER THE NDP BARRETT GOVERNMENT.
 2. ACCORDING TO THE PRESS REPORT, THOMPSON'S TERMS OF REFERENCE ARE TO INQUIRE INTO AND REPORT ON "THE SOCIAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REGIONALLY (INCLUDING THE IMPACT ON FISHERIES) THAT COULD RESULT FROM ESTABLISHMENT OF A MARINE TANKER ROUTE AND CONSTRUCTION OF A MARINE TERMINAL AT KITIMAT." THIS WILL INCLUDE NAVIGATIONAL SAFETY "AND RELATED MATTERS" PLUS THE "BROADER CONCERNS AND ISSUES RELATED TO OIL TANKER MOVEMENTS ON THE WEST COAST AS MIGHT BE AFFECTED BY THE PROPOSAL". THE REPORT IS TO INCLUDE RECOMMENDATIONS ON THE SIZE, CONSTRUCTION AND OPERATION OF THE PROJECTED
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TERMINAL AND THE TYPE OF VESSELS THAT WOULD BE USING IT.

3. BASFORD REPORTEDLY SAID IN VANCOUVER THAT THE INQUIRY WAS NECESSARY BECAUSE THE NEB INQUIRY IS RESTRICTED TO ONLY THE ON-LAND PORTION OF THE PROJECT AND THUS DOES NOT MEET THE CONCERNS OF SUCH GROUPS AS THE B.C. WILDLIFE FEDERATION AND THE SOCIETY FOR POLLUTION AND ENVIRONMENT CONTROL OVER TANKER OR DOCKSIDE OIL SPILLS.

4. THOMPSON IS TO HOLD HEARINGS, PROBABLY AFTER APRIL 29 IN KITIMAT, VANCOUVER AND OTHER LOCATIONS AS HE MAY DECIDE AND TO DELIVER HIS REPORT TO OTTAWA "WITHIN A YEAR--PREFERABLY BEFORE THE END OF 1977."
5. BASFORD IS QUOTED AS STATING THAT THE B.C. ENERGY COMMISSION IS ALSO WELCOME TO LOOK INTO THE KITIMAT PROPOSAL AND TO MAKE A SUBMISSION TO EITHER THE THOMPSON OR NEB INQUIRES. HOWEVER, HE NOTED THAT IN OTTAWA'S VIEW NO PROVINCIAL AGENCY, INCLUDING THE B.C. GOVERNMENT, HAS ANY LEGAL SAY IN WHETHER OR NOT THE PROPOSAL PROCEEDS.
6. THOMPSON IS ON RECORD AS SAYING THAT WESTERN CANADA IS "ENMESHED IN THE U.S. OIL SUPPLY PROBLEM AND THUS SHOULD ASSUME THAT SOME MAJOR OIL DELIVERY SYSTEM MUST BE ACCEPTED BY B.C. LUPPI

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